



SOUTH CAROLINA

COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Closure of Virginia College/Golf Academy of America (VC/GAA) (Updated 3/29/2019)

This page will be updated periodically as CHE receives additional information. Additionally, please visit www.ecacolleges.com for information.

If you have questions not answered on CHE's website, please call CHE at (803) 737-2260.

Q: How will I access my student records?

A: ECA (the parent corporation of Virginia College/Golf Academy of America) has entered into a contract with Parchment to be the official record provider for all ECA issued credentials, including transcripts, diplomas, degree verifications and enrollment verifications. You can find more information on ECA's [information page](#).

The Commission has also received official transcripts for students who attended Virginia College of Golf Academy of America campuses in South Carolina. A transcript request form must be submitted in order for CHE to release your transcript. You may access the transcript request form here:

http://www.che.sc.gov/Portals/0/CHE_Docs/academicaffairs/license/transcript_request_form.pdf.

CHE does not have copies of certificates, diplomas, or any other student records.

Q: Is the school accredited? Is my degree valid?

A: Virginia College and the Golf Academy of America were accredited by the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS) through January 11, 2019. This means that the institution was accredited during your time of attendance.

Q: Will my credits transfer?

A: It is up to the institution to which you are applying to determine which courses it will accept for transfer. We encourage you to speak with enrollment and financial aid officials at each school at which you are interested in applying in order to determine your best option. Be sure to get copies of your transcript to take with you. Please visit our [website](#) to see a list of comparable programs offered in your area

Q: What about my student loans?

A: CHE does not operate student loan programs. Students who were enrolled at a campus at the time of its closure or who withdrew within 120 days of closure may be eligible for closed

school discharge of federal student loans. Visit this page for more information:
<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/forgiveness-cancellation/closed-school>.

Q: If I paid out of pocket, will I get my money back?

A: The Commission requires all institutions that it licenses (such as Virginia College) to hold a surety bond payable to the Commission. The bond proceeds are used for the benefit of students who suffer financial losses of tuition and fees prepaid to an institution that closes. Students who prepaid tuition and fees for instruction they did not receive due to the timing of their institution's closure might be eligible for a refund from the surety bond held by CHE. The amount of the refund will depend upon the amount of the surety bond for that campus and the number of students who file claims against the bond.

Q: What is a surety bond?

A: A surety bond is defined as a three-party agreement that legally binds together a principal who needs the bond, an obligee who requires the bond and a surety company that sells the bond. The bond guarantees the principal will act in accordance with certain laws. If the principal fails to perform in this manner, the bond will cover resulting damages or losses. (source: <https://www.suretybonds.com/surety-bond-definition.html>). In this case, Virginia College (the principal) was required to pledge surety bonds to CHE (the obligee). Upon the closure of an institution licensed by CHE, surety bond funds can be used to pay refunds of unearned tuition and fees, to pay for or subsidize the cost of providing facilities and instruction for students to complete their programs, or to pay expenses to store and maintain records of these students.

Q: What are unearned tuition and fees?

A: Unearned tuition and fees are the tuition and fees prepaid by a student to an institution. If you paid out of pocket for a course of instruction that you did not complete due to the timing of your institution's closure, you might be due a refund of unearned tuition. Federal financial aid and grants are not eligible for reimbursement through the bond claim process.

Q: How do I make a claim?

A: [OneBeacon](#), the company that held the surety bonds, is processing claims against the bonds. See the [Virginia College/GAA information page](#) to find the [surety bond claim form](#) and [surety bond numbers](#).

Q: I'm a cosmetology student. Who should I contact if I have cosmetology program-specific issues or questions?

A: The SC Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation (SCLLR) has oversight for the cosmetology programs at Virginia College. To reach the Board of Cosmetology at SCLLR, call 803-896-4588 or boardinfo@llr.sc.gov.

Q: I was using my veteran's benefits to attend school. What do I need to know?

A: Veterans who were using VA benefits to attend Virginia College or the Golf Academy of America should visit the CHE [website](#) for more information.

Q: Where can I get my form 1098-T tax information?

A: According to ECA representatives, this information was mailed out by Jan. 31. This information will NOT be provided by CHE. The [information page](#) maintained by ECA states ECA students may refer to the following website (<https://heartland.ecsi.net/>) for any questions related to their 1098-T statement and to access an electronic copy of their 1098-T statement.